

OUTDOOR ALLIANCE

February 4, 2020

Rep. Alan Lowenthal
Chair, Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources
108 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Rep. Paul Gosar
Republican Leader, Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources
2057 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: H.R. 5598, the Boundary Waters Wilderness Protection and Pollution Prevention Act

Dear Chairman Lowenthal and Republican Leader Gosar:

On behalf of the outdoor recreation community, we write to share our strong support for H.R. 5598, the Boundary Waters Wilderness Protection and Pollution Prevention Act.

Outdoor Alliance is a coalition of ten member-based organizations representing the human-powered outdoor recreation community. The coalition includes Access Fund, American Canoe Association, American Whitewater, International Mountain Bicycling Association, Winter Wildlands Alliance, The Mountaineers, the American Alpine Club, the Mazamas, Colorado Mountain Club, and Surfrider Foundation and represents the interests of the millions of Americans who climb, paddle, mountain bike, backcountry ski and snowshoe, and enjoy coastal recreation on our nation's public lands, waters, and snowscapes.

The nation's most visited Wilderness area, the Boundary Waters features unique rock formations, expansive boreal forests, and a vast network of clean lakes and rivers. The Boundary Waters is also one of the most significant stores of clean water in the nation, and the area provides a substantial economic benefit to local communities. The area is a cornerstone of Minnesota's growing \$16.7 billion outdoor recreation economy.



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The Boundary Waters area is currently under threat from expanded sulfide-ore copper mining, and this legislation is a necessary step to protect the environmental, recreational, and existing economic values of the landscape.

Sulfide-ore copper mining is an activity with known and severe environmental effects, and the unique hydrology of this area makes it particularly susceptible to damage. Allowing sulfide-ore mining at the edge of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness would directly threaten the health of one of America's most accessible and most visited Wilderness areas, as well as the jobs and businesses that depend on outdoor recreation in the area. Dozens of outdoor businesses, including outfitters and specialty retailers, have been part of the effort to protect the Boundary Waters.

We fully support the Boundary Waters Wilderness Protection and Pollution Prevention Act, and we appreciate the subcommittee's attention to protecting outdoor recreation and conservation values in Minnesota.

Best regards,



Louis Geltman
Policy Director
Outdoor Alliance

cc: Adam Cramer, Executive Director, Outdoor Alliance
Chris Winter, Executive Director, Access Fund
Beth Spilman, Interim Executive Director, American Canoe Association
Mark Singleton, Executive Director, American Whitewater
Kent McNeill, CEO, International Mountain Bicycling Association
Todd Walton, Executive Director, Winter Wildlands Alliance
Tom Vogl, Chief Executive Officer, The Mountaineers
Phil Powers, Chief Executive Officer, American Alpine Club
Mitsu Iwasaki, Executive Director, the Mazamas
Keegan Young, Executive Director, Colorado Mountain Club
Chad Nelson, Chief Executive Officer, Surfrider Foundation

